

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 169886

FOR SIMONS FROM ANDREWS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. PERSONNEL ITEM - CARL SCHMIDT DISCUSSED WITH YOU DURING HIS VISIT IN MAY THE QUESTION OF WHAT COULD BEST BE DONE TO UTILIZE STEVE JOHNSON (NOT TO MENTION KEEP UP HIS ROMANIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS) AFTER HE FINISHES LANGUAGE TRAINING AT THE END OF FEBRUARY. (BOTH HE AND JUDY START ROMANIAN ON AUGUST 21 AND JUDY IS TO GO DIRECTLY TO POST ON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE.) CARL HAS SUBSEQUENTLY EXPLORED THIS QUESTION WITH PERSONNEL AND HAS COME UP WITH THE FOLLOWING.

2. FIRST OF ALL, STEVE'S POSITION IS, THE SOONER HE CAN GET OUT TO BUCHAREST, THE BETTER. HE'S PREPARED TO SERVE IN ANY CAPACITY WHERE HE COULD BE HELPFUL, INCLUDING CONSULAR, E/C SECTION, ETC. THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO FIND A WAY CONSISTENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S PERSONNEL REGULATIONS. AS
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MATTERS NOW STAND, JOHN TIPTON IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR DIRECT TRANSFER UNTIL OCTOBER 1979. PER CANNOT "DOUBLE INCUMBER" A POSITION (I.E., HAVE OVERLAP) FOR MORE THAN ONE MONTH. FURTHERMORE, THE RULES DO NOT REPEAT NOT PERMIT A PERSON TO GO TDY, SAY TO THE E/C SECTION, TO A POST TO WHICH HE/SHE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED. STEVE COULD GO TO POST ON LEAVE WITHOUT PAY STATUS, BUT WHO WANTS TO WORK FOR THE SHEER JOY OF IT?

(FRANKLY, WE DIDN'T TRY THAT OUT ON HIM.)

3. THE ONLY POSSIBILITY WE HAVE COME UP WITH SO FAR WOULD BE FOR STEVE TO GO TO ROMANIA ON STUDENT STATUS. WE'VE CHECKED THIS WITH THE FSI LANGUAGE SCHOOL WHICH WOULD BE PREPARED TO APPROVE ASSIGNING HIM TO ROMANIA FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF HIS SIX-MONTH PROGRAM AT FSI, TO CONTINUE HIS LANGUAGE TRAINING. HOWEVER, FSI'S PROVISOS ARE THAT (A) IT WOULD ONLY BE FOR A MAXIMUM OF SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS, (B) THE PROGRAM OF LANGUAGE TEACHING BE A GOOD ONE, AND (C) A REASONABLE PER DIEM ARRANGEMENT BE WORKED OUT. REGARDING THE LAST-MENTIONED, ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT SPECIFY WHAT THEY MEANT, WE ASSUME THIS WOULD ENTAIL GOVERNMENT QUARTERS, WHICH WOULD RULE OUT TRAINING ANYWHERE IN THE COUNTRY EXCEPT IN BUCHAREST.

4. REGARDING JOHN TIPTON'S ONWARD ASSIGNMENT, PER IS WELL AWARE OF HIS INTEREST IN RETURNING TO LATIN AMERICA. ALSO, CARL HAS MADE THEM AWARE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S RECOMMENDATION THAT JOHN BE ASSIGNED EITHER AS POLITICAL COUNSELOR OR DCM, DEPENDING ON THE SIZE OF THE POST. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO PER, THEY ARE FAR FROM EVEN GIVING ANY INDICATIONS OF WHAT MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING FOR JOHN FOR NEXT YEAR. THEY DID RECENTLY MENTION THAT BECAUSE DIRECT TRANSFERS IN OCTOBER OF ANY YEAR ARE RATHER OFF-CYCLE, THEY WOULD PREFER TO CUR-

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TAIL HIS ASSIGNMENT TO ABOUT JULY OF 1979 SO THAT HIS TRANSFER WOULD MESH, WITHOUT A LONG GAP, WITH THE PERSON HE EVENTUALLY WILL REPLACE. NOTHING DEFINITE ON THIS, HOWEVER, AS FAR AS WE KNOW NOW.

5. ALL OF THIS LEAVES US AND WE'RE AFRAID, YOU, UP IN THE AIR. BUT SINCE PER OCCASIONALLY TALKS OF ASSIGNING STEVE INTO BEX FOR SIX MONTHS AFTER HE FINISHES ROMANIAN, WE THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF THE POST CAME IN BEFORE LONG WITH A PER CHANNEL MESSAGE MAKING A SOLID CASE FOR ITS NEED FOR STEVE ASAP AFTER HE COMPLETES LANGUAGE TRAINING, PERHAPS RECOMMENDING THE ADDITIONAL IN-COUNTRY LANGUAGE TRAINING, AND ALSO ASKING PER WHAT ELSE MIGHT BE DONE TO PERMIT HIM TO GO TO WORK. THEN, AT LEAST, YOU WOULD BE FORMALLY ON RECORD. IT MIGHT ALSO ENCOURAGE THEM TO BECOME A BIT MORE FLEXIBLE AND/OR IMAGINATIVE. WHEN YOU DO COME IN WITH SUCH A MESSAGE, PLEASE SLUG IT FOR EUR/EX AS WELL AND LET US KNOW BY O-I CHANNEL. IN THAT WAY, WE'LL KNOW TO ASK FOR A COPY. VANCE

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